CNN - DEATH OF PRESIDENT RONALD WILSON REAGAN - NEWSNIGHT (6-10-2004)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqx19KuvPS4 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqx19KuvPS4)

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From Thursday , June 10th, 2004 CNN NEWSNIGHT coverage of the death of President Ronald Wilson Reagan. Reagan served as the 40th POTUS from 1981 trough 1989.

- Coverage runs from 10:00 P.M E.T - 11:00 P.M E.T

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all that and more in the hour ahead we begin tonight at the capitol all day people have been climbing the 108 steps to the rotunda where president reagan's casket lies in state tomorrow with the funeral then the long flight home the last chapters will be written in a remarkable life for thousands of people though famous and otherwise from all around the country and all around the world today was truly the last goodbye we begin with cnn's joe johns the unannounced appearance of the president and first lady in the rotunda startled visitors gathered around the reagan casket later the bush has paid a courtesy call on nancy reagan joining a list of well-wishers at blair house including former british prime minister margaret thatcher a dear friend of mr reagan she wrote in the guest book turani well done thou good and faithful servant former soviet president mikhail gorbachev wrote i convey my deep feelings of condolences to dear nancy and the whole family and former canadian prime minister brian mulroney who will eulogize reagan on friday told reporters mrs reagan is holding up well given the very painful circumstances in remarkably good good shape at the capitol the vigil continues in the long line one man came in full traditional dress some came in uniform most in street clothes from all over the world frank ola of hungary drove down from canada well i came to pay homage to president reagan was my hero because he liberated my old country so my nephews and nieces can live in freedom joyce o'kine lives here now but moved to the u.s from ghana he changed my life i'm an american citizen today because of ronald reagan and i'm a proud american many waited for three hours plus just to get a five-minute glimpse more if they were lucky enough to arrive at the changing of the guard there were some tears and a few last

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there were some tears and a few last salutes for the former commander-in-chief all in silence except for the footsteps or an occasional noisy baby for those with special privileges or higher office or ties to the former president there was a separate line or no waiting at all former republican senator bob dole paid his respects as did supreme court justice sandra day o'connor senate majority leader bill frist brought the new iraqi president deputy defense secretary paul wolfowitz came with corporal james wright a decorated marine badly injured in iraq the vigil ends tomorrow with a brief departure service as the late president is taken from the capitol for the last time and on to a funeral at washington national cathedral erin to keep the capitol open all night tonight yes they will keep it all open tonight until early tomorrow morning they'll close it down briefly to prepare for the departure service and is there still as you and i are sitting here talking is there still a long line of people wanting to get in yes people have been here throughout the day throughout the night it is really quite amazing if you walk through the rotunda very very silent you go up marble stairs through black drapery on into the rotunda total silence all you can hear is people walking and as i said occasionally the baby crying joe thank you joe john's on the hill i imagine many of the people who were walking into the capitol today had

never been there before this was their first moment in their house [Music] we noted earlier this week that most of us are fortunate enough to have privacy in our most painful moments president reagan outlined his funeral plans after he left office as president all presidents are asked to do that the state funeral unfolding in washington is how he and his family wanted it to be how he wanted to be remembered

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how he wanted to be remembered sheila tate was nancy reagan's press secretary for five years has remained a close friend she was watching as the president's casket was brought up the steps of the capitol and earlier today when we talked we began by asking her how the former first lady was holding up well she's in really the toughest week of her life i think i mean she's saying goodbye this is the final goodbye you know it's sort of like well step back she when when ronald reagan was diagnosed with alzheimer's she was so the only word i can just use to describe it is sad she was just overwhelmed with sadness and and remorse and regret and concern and upset and and over the years why remorse well for what she was going to lose oh okay um over the years she came to accept the disease the illness and um think more about what she could do to help other people in terms of alzheimer's and she's done a lot in that regard does she worry about how the public sees her now i don't think so i mean let me look at her she's wearing these big glasses did you have you noticed the glasses she would never have worn those glasses in public before i said that someone yesterday i said i can't imagine she would have worn those glasses publicly she wants to see what's happening now very carefully i think she wants to remember all of this what does she want in a sense out of this she has to share

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in a sense out of this she has to share this most intimate difficult moment with the country she wants people to have a chance to say goodbye to him she wants this is a huge opportunity for generations who didn't know him who weren't even alive when he was president to learn about him and his legacy i think you know she feels he was a great president and a great human being and um she wants to use it to use the opportunity as best she can to make sure people remember in this the last 10 years do you think it's changed her this lady is this is the lady who took so much grief for protecting her husband when he was president and she then spent the his last 10 years of life protecting him and his dignity and i think we're all grateful for that and and that's her last big job this week is to protect him that's why she keeps trying to reach him those are when you see when you see those moments you know i don't know how i react to them when you saw her put her that was that was it for me the the one yesterday where she i have so many times seen her do that where she touches something and she keeps smoothing it out and i mean i've seen her do that it was really really quite amazing this is an american moment i mean it is in the best sense of the term a head of state who clearly mattered whether you agreed with him or not i mean that's not the point who said that to me standing in the window of bill frist's office as they were as we watched the caisson being brought

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as we watched the caisson being brought up those steps was margaret thatcher and and when the um jets came over in the missing man formation she said oh the ceremony the ceremony it's so american the country gets in a way that it didn't or it hasn't in a long time that an american president whatever his party is an important person something that we care about and i think they're very they they want to embrace the knowledge that he was a good and kind and decent man as well as a powerful man sheila tate and we talked to her late this afternoon

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